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KING OF LOVE

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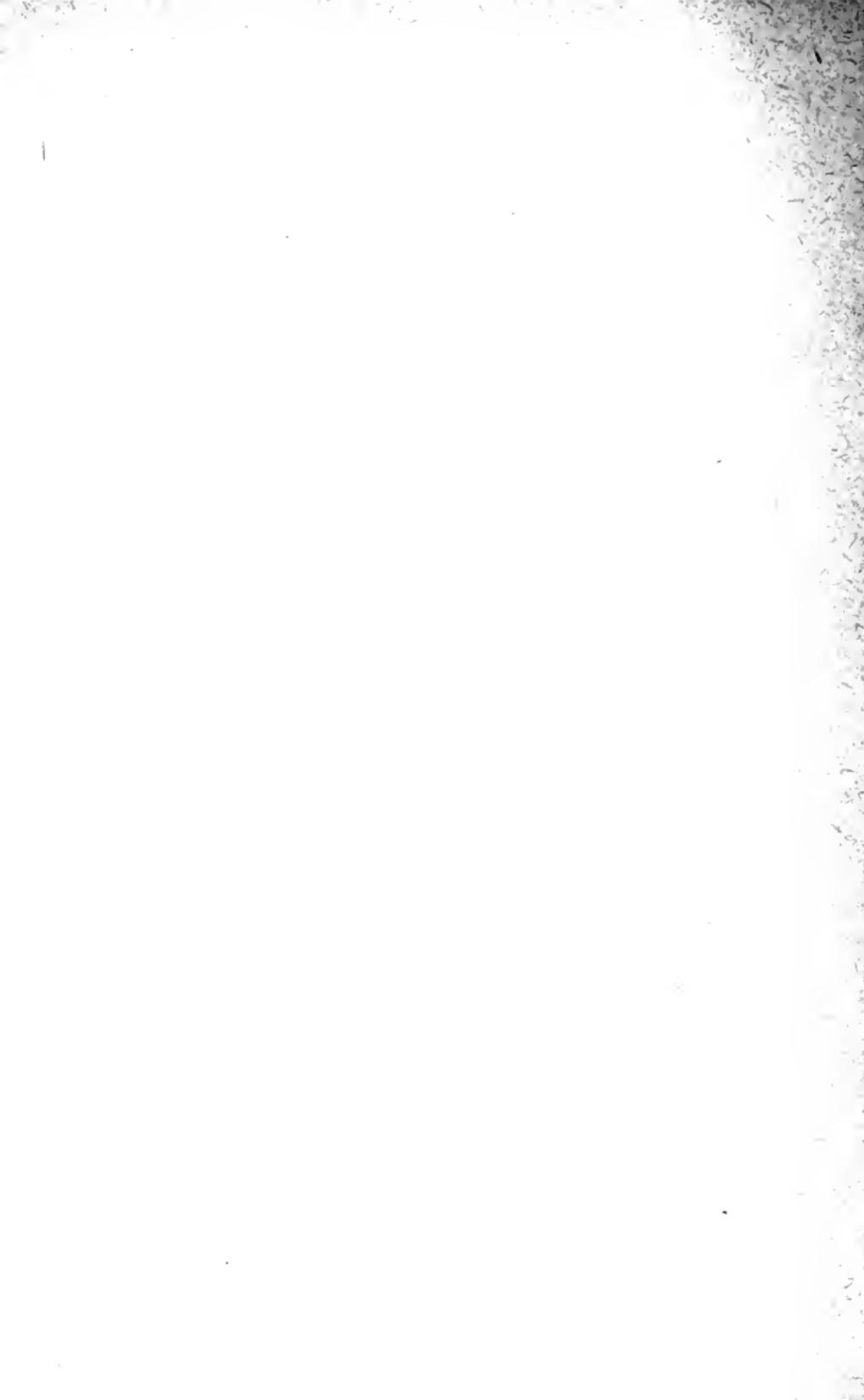


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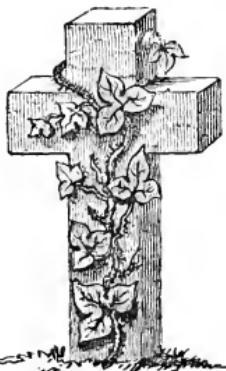
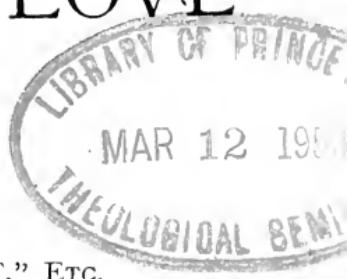


THE KING OF LOVE.



# THE KING OF LOVE

BY THE AUTHOR OF  
"HOW TO ENTER INTO REST," ETC.



**JE MEURS OÙ JE M'ATTACHE.**

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TO THE MEMORY  
OF  
HIS GREAT GOODNESS.

“If we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.”—ROM. viii. 25.

“Though it tarry, wait for it, it will *surely* come.”

## PREFACE.

---

IT seems to me there is one great ring throughout the world; throughout all nature; throughout the universe; one commanding influence to which above every other our hearts turn and obey. One strong cord which knits and knots all the other cords that bind our life; one sound that vibrates above and through every other; one ray of light that gives light by which to see all others; one note of music which harmonizes every other; one centre to which all must converge.

Is it love?

“Love is born of God.”



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I.

B

“The King of love my Shepherd is,  
Whose goodness faileth never;  
Nothing I lack, if I am His,  
And He is mine for ever.”

## HIMSELF

“To know the love of Christ.”—EPH. iii. 19.

HIMSELF, Jesus Himself; Human, Divine; God and Man; the One, in whom alone, whatever is divine within us can find satisfaction; the One, towards whom our poor human nature stretches out its hands, and cries for deliverance and rest and peace; this One—He is the King of Love; He is God; God is Love.

Oh, what a God is this God of ours! How does His love never weary, never tire, never faint! Has He not grown foot-sore with following the straying sheep in the wilderness? Is not His shoulder yet weary with the burden of carrying them to the fold? Has not

the pain yet caused Him to forget to rejoice? Is this Shepherd, weary and worn, with bleeding feet and aching limbs, journeying to the highest heights, pursuing to the lowest depths, *is* He a King?

Who but the Highest of all could venture to the lowest? Who but Love could *bear* such slights, such rebuffs? What but the mighty tenderness of God Himself could thus seek and thus *find*?

Ah! we can but imagine, we can but guess, we can but reach out towards this love; and yet it can penetrate our inmost soul. Oh, to know it! Oh, to have it for our own!

Let us turn often and watch this wondrous thing. Let us gaze and gaze, till it enters deeply within our soul.

And first let us consider, wherein has it shown itself?

. . . “See, His hands are nailed, they cannot strike thee; His feet also, He cannot run from thee; His arms are wide open to embrace thee; His head hangs down to kiss thee; His very heart

is open, so that therein, see, look, spy, behold, and thou shalt see nothing but love, love, love to thee ; hide thee therefore, lay thy head there with the Evangelist. This is the cleft of the rock wherein Elias stood. This is the pillow of down for all aching heads. Anoint thy head with this oil ; let this ointment embalm thy head, and wash thy face. Tarry thou here, and quite sure art thou I warrant thee. Say with Paul, Who can separate me from the love of God ? Can death, can poverty, sickness, hunger or any misery persuade thee that God loves thee not ? Nay, nothing can separate thee from the love wherewith God hath loved thee in Christ Jesus ; whom He loveth, He loveth unto the end.”\*

“Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us.”  
(1 John iii. 16.)

“I am the Good Shepherd, the Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep.”  
(John x. 11.)

\* Bradford.

*This* is the love of the Son ; the beloved Son, in whom the Father is well-pleased ; the only begotten ; the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of His person.

How came it then, that such an one—precious, beloved, one with the Father, *gave* His life? gave it for enemies and murderers ; children of darkness and disobedience :

Surely we should have snatched our dearest one from such a lot ; it would have been far easier to bear the bitterness and shame oneself than to see them suffer. But God—let His well-beloved go ; even *sent* Him ; and to what a fearful, what an awful change ! From a home of light to a land of darkness ; from before the face of Love to the hatred of wicked men ; from power to weakness ; from glory to shame ; from honour to ignominy ; from majesty and life to drink the bitter death-cup to the very dregs. How could it be ?

It is the mystery of Love to which no heart has ever yet pierced ; but every heart that has embraced it for its own, vibrates, struck by the same chord, as it dwells on the Oneness of the Father and the Son—the One God who is Love, and then reads :—

“ *The Father* sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.” (1 John iv. 14.)

Oh, what majesty, what depths, what length and breadth and height, in these simple words ; what oneness of purpose, what perfection of love, what fellowship of the spirit. And this God is *our* God. This love is for *us*. He wishes us to be very personal, to make no mistake about it, therefore He tells us,—“ I have loved *thee* with an everlasting love,” (Jer. xxxi. 3), and that we may not say it is too mighty for us to know, in another place He specially speaks of it in His human nature, “ I drew them with the cords of a man, with bands of love.” (Hos. xi. 4.)

No, it is not too mighty ; it is not too

tender; we need it all; we little know *how* we need it.

It is beyond us, and away from us, outside us and around us, spreading far and near, overflowing its borders, stretching wider than ocean's reach, encompassing the earth, brooding over this sin-stricken world, inhabiting eternity, and yet—and yet there is a home for us in its very centre; the only home where rest is to be found; the only centre from which we shall never wish to spring, even in the very heart of our Lord. “Abide in me.”

And as if this—think of it—as if this were not enough; He, Love, looks down,—perhaps with that blessed, tender, pitiful look, that we fancy He must have laid on the little children, the disciples would have sent away from Him—He looks down, and what does He see? A heart, evil and defiled, miserable and poor and wretched; and as if He had not yet bestowed enough, He adds,—“And *I* in you.”

Is it not wonderful?

“Abide in me,” to show us His beauty; “and I in you,” to make us beautiful for Himself. And when we know this, we know a little, just a little of what it means when it says,—“The King brought me into His chambers.” (Cant. i. 4.) Into the heart that bled and broke for me, into the heart that suffered and died for me, into the heart where “love strong as death”—(Cant. viii. 6); broke the bands of death, and rose triumphant over the grave, and lives at God’s right hand, until the church, His bride, whom He loved, and for whom He gave Himself—sanctified and cleansed—shall be presented unto Himself; a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and without blemish (Eph. iv. 25, 27); and He shall come forth crowned, “in the day of the gladness of His heart” (Cant. iii. 11); and shall “see of the travail of His soul, and be *satisfied*.” (Is. liii.)

Is not this blessed to look for, and all through Him? does it not make us long ever more earnestly to know “the King in His beauty?” (Is. xxxiii. 1. 7), to “know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge?” (Eph. iii. 19.) Oh! what a King to serve, where He Himself is Love, and the service all love; and where, the more we gaze, the more we know and feel His love. What can we say of Him?

“ My Beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand. His head is as the most fine gold; His locks are bushy and black as a raven; His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of water, washed with milk and fitly set. His cheeks as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers; His lips like lilies, dropping sweet-smelling myrrh. . . His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars; His mouth is most sweet; yea, He is altogether *lovely*.” (Cant. v. 10, &c.) And the New Testament can find no fuller or more perfect description, and so

sunis all up in a short word, and calls Him :—“The pearl of great price.” Is it not enough that “This is *my* beloved, and this is *my* friend ?” (Cant. v. 16.)



II.

“Lord Jesus, if I cannot say  
That I have love to Thee ;  
Do thou, I pray Thee, day by day,  
Reveal thy love to me.”

“When the heart says, sighing to be approved,  
‘Oh, that I loved,’ and stops—God answers, ‘Loved.’”

“Oh Lord, let that become possible to me by Thy  
grace, which by nature seems impossible to me.”—  
THOMAS À KEMPIS.

## WE TO HIM.

“To know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.”  
EPH. iii. 19.

AND if this is our Pearl, how must we set it?

No two people will set a jewel precisely in the same manner; yet, if they have any just appreciation of it, their object will be the same. They will strive to give it such a setting as will make the gazer forget that it *is* set—lost in admiration of the gem.

Such must be our aim, our desire, our fervent longing. The life that is bestowed upon us must be gathered up so close to the Pearl, that the frail setting will be forgotten, in the lights and

shades and glory that the gem will cast over it.

Therefore we come to this—that all our life must be *love*, feeble and poor though it be, and unworthy the name of love; yet in the eyes of the King, it is the most—the only—fit setting for the Pearl; and the soft lustre that spreads from the jewel will extend over the setting, glorifying it with its own light.

“Oh, wonderful, that Thou should’st let  
So vile a heart as mine  
Love Thee with such a love as this,  
And make so free with Thine.”\*

Let us see what one of old says of this love of God in the heart:—“The noble love of Jesus impels a man to do great things, and stirs him up to be always longing for what is more perfect; nothing is sweeter than love; nothing more courageous, nothing higher, nothing wider, nothing more pleasant, nothing fuller nor better in heaven and

\* Faber.

earth, because love is born of God, and cannot rest but in God above all created things. He that loveth, flieth, runneth, and rejoiceth; he is free, and is not bound. He giveth all for all, because he resteth in One highest above all things, from whom all that is good flows and proceeds.”\*

Do you know something of this? Do you know what it is to have your very soul athirst for the love of God? to stretch out your hands eagerly that they may be filled with the love of Christ, good measure, pressed down, and running over, till men shall turn to gaze, and whisper that “you have been with Jesus?” (Acts. iv. 13.)

Perhaps the answer comes, that you know the thirsting, and the stretching out for fullness, but you do not know what it is to be filled; you are weary with seeking, and are fain to cry out, “Oh, that I had wings like a dove, for

\* Thomas à Kempis.

then would I flee away and be at rest." (Ps. lv. 6.) Listen then, "But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto *him*. . . . then he put forth his hand, and took her and pulled her in unto *him*." (Gen. viii. 9.)

That is where you will find the rest of love, tired, longing soul; not in turning to weep over your poor store; not in summing up what you have, or have not, of love; not in gazing at the emptiness, and only longing for what should be there. Not in any of these things; but in resolutely turning away from all the goodness, as well as from all the badness in you; in turning away from all the love in you, as much as from all the want of love, and instead of that,—"Beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the *Lord*;" for then comes the change in self, and "We . . . are changed *into the same image*, as by the spirit of the *Lord*." (2 Cor. iii. 18.)

It is by gazing into *His* face, that we

learn His love, and that at last our own heart responds, and finds that it can pour out love and thanks, and we are ready to say, as the disciples, “Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the scriptures?” (Luke xxiv. 32.) Only, that with us, it may be for ever the present, and not the *past*, for when he vanished from earthly sight, and ascended on high, He left us this blessed assurance of His certain and continual presence, “*Lo, I am with you always.*” (Mat. xxviii. 19.)

And this blessed life has no end; blessed indeed, because full of love, and therefore growing ever more perfectly in the “Holiness without which no man shall see the Lord.” (Heb. xii. 14.) Abiding in Him and he in us, our path becomes “as a shining light, shining more and more unto the perfect day.” (Pro. iv. 18.) And we begin to know the truth of those lines in the “Rhythm of St. Bernard,” applying them to our life

in Christ, our knowledge of Him, our love and satisfaction in Him :—

“Oh thirst for ever ardent,  
Yet, *evermore content.*”

Do you understand it? do you know it? I think you must; surely it is growing, it is nearing, it is coming.

“The love of Jesus what it is,  
None but His loved ones know.”

And you being a loved one, have already begun your share in knowing what it is prayed that “the Father would grant you; . . . . to know the love of *Christ*, which passeth knowledge.” Oh, wondrous prayer, and yet not wondrous, for it comes to us from the heart of God; an inspiration of the Holy Spirit; and you, having heard the loving voice of Jesus once, *can* never, *will* never, rest till you hear it *always*. But we have yet something to learn of the manner in which this love comes to us; rather, it is already come *to* us; let us see more then of the way in which it comes *in* us

### III.

“ God is never so far off,  
As even to be near;  
He dwells within, our spirit is  
The home He holds most dear.

“ To think of Him as by our side,  
Is almost as untrue  
As to remove His throne, beyond  
Those skies of starry blue.

“ So all the while I thought myself  
Homeless, forlorn and weary!  
Missing my joy, I walked the earth,  
Myself God’s Sanctuary.”

FABER.

I Cor. iii. 16.

## WITHIN US.

“The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us.”—ROM. v. 5.

HERE is the great secret—the great force—the constraining influence which draws out our heart in love to Christ; and love to Him *can* come out of our poor, weak, evil heart, for it comes just in the same way as all the other Christian graces—that is, it is *God's* love, which we receive from Him, to return to Him, and He accepts it as our very own gift.

It is not that we have a scanty supply of love ourselves, and must diligently trade with that and make it more; no, it is a divine, spiritual love, which is of

God, and yet dwells with us—“The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.” (Rom. v. 5.)

Could we receive it in a more precious way? God’s own love, and it is shed into our hearts by the blessed Holy Spirit.

And how does He bring God’s love into our heart, making it so *one* with us, that we can give it back to Him as our own? *Not* by occupying us with ourselves, with what we have or have not, but thus,—He takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto us—“He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you . . . . He shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.” (John xvi. 14, 15.)

We cannot be looking at two things at the same moment—not at ourself and at Christ; and we read that the Holy Spirit convinces of “sin” those who “believe not;” but, having believed, it seems to me, His great work is to reveal the Lord Jesus to us, and the more clearly

and fully we see and know Him, the more clearly and fully do we see all else.

There is, and always will be, an under-current of the knowledge of our sinful nature and past sins; but if we stop to gaze at these, will it not weaken and unnerve us? Perhaps with you it is a great grief that, since knowing Christ as your Saviour, you do not *feel* your past sins more deeply; you think that if only you were more conscious of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and of your own sins in particular, it would fill you with love to Him who has redeemed you, and that on the other hand, if you had real deep love to Him, *that* would bring you under deep conviction of sin.

Both are needed, but they will not come in seeking for them as for things by themselves; but the more we know *Christ Himself*, the more shall we love Him, and the more shall we shrink away from everything that is hateful and displeasing to Him.

Do we not need, and shall we not seek a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit within us? How do we know what He will not work upon us and in us—to what new and lovely paths He will lead us; for, following Him, delivering ourselves up to Him, “the heart . . . . launches out on the boundless ocean of the love of God. It comes to ‘know the love of Christ,’ of which yet it is conscious that it ‘passeth knowledge.’ Hungering and thirsting for righteousness, it has come to know Jesus, and been ‘filled,’ and yet never did it know such quenchless yearnings for a holier life;’ ‘perfect,’ yet ‘not already perfected;’ ‘satisfied,’ yet ‘hungering and thirsting;’ at rest, yet ‘earnestly contending;’ knowing the love of Christ, yet panting to comprehend what is its breadth, and length, and depth, and height; always rejoicing, yet sorrowful; an inward knowledge of God has solved all the paradoxes of His Word.”\*

\* Walking in the Light.—R. P. S.

Ah, St. Paul well knew what He was saying when He told the brethren to “strive together with Him for the love of the Spirit.” (Rom. xv. 30.)

How holy, how gentle, His leadings; how near to Christ; how one with Him; how abounding with love, and therefore with joy, peace, and hope—for love reveals to us all secrets; loving, we are full of joy in the object of our love; eager, bold, glad, for we have but one object at heart—to love and show that we love; and already we are triumphant, exultant in Him.

Full of peace, for there is nothing unresting; the dove, who finds rest with *Him*, wanders no more; the wanderings were too sad, too lonely, too full of bitter cravings and impossibilities—now, in His presence, there is fullness of joy—and He continually—*always*—makes that one “full of joy with His countenance;” abundantly satisfied, full of peace to the very centre. Winds may blow, and tempests fall with terrible violence, yet

the soul—the true, real, living self—is still at *peace*, unshattered, untormented ; because, whatever betides, God “*keeps* those in perfect peace whose minds are stayed on Him, because they *trust* in Him” (Is. xxvi. 3) ; and our mind, still less our heart, cannot trustingly be stayed, except where we love.

Full of hope—for the past life tells us that what has been shall be—and love exults in the knowledge that “goodness and mercy do follow” and crown every day ; and not only that, but each day leaves a full grand assurance for the future.—

“Then on Thy grandeur I will lay me down,  
Already life is heaven to me ;  
No cradled child more softly lies than I ;  
Come soon, Eternity.”\*

For whether in life or death, nothing, I am persuaded, shall separate us from the love of God, which is, in Christ Jesus, shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Spirit.

\* Faber.

IV.

“ Give thy heart’s best treasure,  
From fair nature learn ;  
Give thy love, and ask not,  
Wait not a return.

“ And the more thou spendest,  
From thy little store ;  
With a double bounty,  
God shall give thee more.”

A. A. PROCTER.

“ Love that gives its own for naught,  
Is like the God of Heaven.”

## BESIDE US.

“The love of Christ constraineth us.”—2 COR. v. 14.

“Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto *Me*.”—MATT. xxv. 40.

IN the great and terrible trials of life, the anxious and dreaded ones, all who are Christ’s, know what it is to commit them to the love and wisdom of God, and to rest on Him. I will not speak of these, but in relation with the small, insignificant troubles of life, let us consider this word of the King’s—“Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye did it unto *Me*.”

Oh, are our daily lives, the blameless,

loving lives that become the children of a King whose name is Love? Are they gentle, lowly, humble-minded; every action, an action of love to Him?

For such they may be. *Spent with Jesus*, such they must of necessity be.

But then, how is it that we meet so many Christians who are quick-tempered, ill-tempered, cross, vain, worldly-minded, irritable, full of worries, teasing, abrupt, sarcastic, rough, to be approached on some subjects, and at some times, with extreme caution; impatient, ungracious, self-seeking, ready with sharp words, puffed up, easily provoked, ready with scandal and unkind gossip; doubting, dark, miserable, desponding?

These, all together, are much; each taken separately is called "a very small thing," and a "servant of Jesus Christ" thinks nothing of excusing his roughness, or sharp words, or want of forethought.

But oh! ought His servants to be guilty of these things? Dear friend, the shame you bring on yourself is little;

it is *nothing*, in comparison with the shame you bring on Christ by not honouring Him.

Do you belong to *Christ*, and are you “worried to death?”

Have you His comforting presence and boundless love, and can any one and anything “put you out in a minute?”

May you be full of joy with His countenance” (Acts iii. 28), and is there “nothing worth living for?”

Has Christ forgiven you all your trespasses, and is there some one to whom you mean “to tell out your mind?” Did Christ “not please Himself?” (Rom. xv. 3); and do we seek the pleasantest seat—the warmest corner—the first sight of a new book?

Did He “*suffer* for *us*, leaving us an example that we should follow His steps” (1 Peter iii. 21); and do we grudge the small inconvenience of running a message—laying down our work, or reading, to oblige another? When He was “reviled, did He not revile again”

(1 Peter ii. 23), and does an interruption in an important, or oftener still, in an unimportant occupation, make us hasty and irritable?

Did publicans and sinners draw near to Him to find and meet a loving welcome, and are we ungracious and sharp to those who love us, and whom we love?

Is He the Author of that love which “covereth a multitude of sins” (1 Peter iv. 8), and are we, His servants, eager with a bit of scandal because it is amusing,—with a bit of unkind gossip, because it passes away the time?

Oh, what is the reason that we are so un-Christlike; so miserably mean and little, and with it all, quite ready to pass it over and excuse ourselves? Surely it is the want of *love*—surely, love to Him, would put these things right, for the very lowliest and humblest act may be done to *Him*, out of love to Him. “All, . . . . the very least things which all must do every day; which our Lord

includes under the name of ‘daily bread.’ So that we may stop at nothing short of all, but our whole being, doing, thinking, living, willing, having, longing, be wrapt up, gathered, concentrated, in the one will and good pleasure of God.” \*

You are ready for His service; it is the delight and joy of your life to work for Him, will you not then begin, where perhaps His eye will rest most approvingly of all upon you, in your own narrow circle, and live such a life of love, as will make men wonder, for they will see, not you, but Christ living in you.

Think, if *He* had to live your life, how He would live it? What graciousness, what gentleness, what obligingness, what a quickness to see and supply the wants of others, there would be; what loving thought before correction, what glad, bright sympathy in joy, what tenderness in trouble?

Are you not ready for this, for His

\* Dr. Pusey.

sake? Has He not loved you *enough*? or are you ready for a great sacrifice, and reluctant for a small one? Are you anxious to serve Him in much, and not ready to please Him in little?

“Let not your heart be troubled” (John xiv. 1), is as much a command as, “Thou shalt not steal;” but it seems as if very many never even think that it is a command at all; they give as a sort of answer, “Oh, but I have so many things to think about and to trouble me!” Christ did not forget that you would have those “many things” when He said those words, and yet He said them twice over. These things would not “trouble” you, if you were absolutely living with Him; you have no right to hug your worries and troubles, as if they were a very important part of your Christian life, and showed great zeal and earnestness. They are not so; they are a great hindrance to your growth in grace; a great dis-honour to the Lord Jesus Christ; yet we

have got into such a habit of troubling and worrying about insignificant little matters, which for the most part are sure to be over and forgotten before to-morrow, that we think them a necessity: that there is something peculiar about our trials, which makes it impossible for us to take them calmly, and rest them on Jesus, waiting for *Him* to deliver us.

But, we may get rid of them all. We may give them up, *if we will*. When you begin to worry, it is not that Christ has gone away from you, but that you have shut your heart away from Him. If you really believed that He who is Love and Power, were *with you*, could you be so foolish? Would you not rather turn and put your hands in His, and look into His blessed face of Love?

If you do that, trouble, worry, impatience, will melt away, for though He is Love, yet are His eyes as "a flame of fire." The fire of His love not only burns away all that is sinful, but strengthens that which is weak and feeble—in a

word, *unites* us to Himself, “purifying us even as He is pure.” (1 John iii. 4.)

Troubles and afflictions, be they large, or be they small, are not sent to let us worry and fret, but to make our trust, and confidence, and hope in God, stronger and stronger, till at last ~~nothing~~ shall be able to take us from Him. Everything that tends to strengthen us in Him should fill us with encouragement.

Perhaps some one says that if it were for Christ alone it would be easy, but that worries and troubles come through others. Yes, it is so; we are all—the very best—only “earthen vessels;” but yet, God knew, not only that troubles would come, but *how* they would come, and still He said, “Let not your heart be troubled.”

He knew there would be temptations to anger and need for forbearance, and He not only says, “forbearing one another,” but, “forbearing one another in *love*.”

He knew there would be occasions for

vain-glory, and He speaks of “lowliness and meekness.” He knew we should be tempted to impatience, and He speaks of “long-suffering.”

He knew we must rebuke, and He tells us to do it in the “spirit of meekness.”

He knew ~~we~~ must sometimes speak truths that are not pleasant, and He tells us of “speaking the truth in *love*.”

He knew we should be tempted to be selfish, and He tells us, “Christ pleased not Himself.”

He knew that we should be tempted to be irritable and unsympathising, therefore He prays “that the God of Patience and consolation will grant us to be *like-minded one to another* according to (marg. after the pattern of) Christ Jesus. (Rom. xv. 5.)

Do you think there is *any* little trouble He cannot overcome? Only give yourself completely and absolutely to Him; ask Him to be especially careful about you in these little matters; pour out your very heart and soul as an offering to Him,

and do the least act for love to Him, and you will find Him sufficient for *all*.

Does He not treasure up the times when from your love to Him you forbore to speak; when you listened patiently to another for His sake; when you took the last place, for His sake; when you did that uninviting errand for His sake; when you applied yourself to that distasteful, fidgety little task for His sake?

Oh, for what an One we may love and live, who will so graciously and lovingly accept these little offerings! Will you make them for His beloved sake? and remember for your comfort, His own words:—

“Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, ye did it unto *Me*.” When you thus live, how natural and true will you find it to repeat:—

“ Ah Jesus, Jesus, dearest Lord,  
    Forgive me if I say  
For very love, Thy sacred name,  
    A thousand times a day.” \*

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\* Faber.

V.

“ Oh, for freedom, for freedom in worshipping God,  
For the mountain-top feeling of generous souls,  
For the health, for the air, of the hearts deep and broad,  
Where grace, not in rills, but in cataracts rolls.

“ Most good is the brisk wholesome service of fear,  
And the calm wise obedience of conscience is sweet ;  
And good are all worships, all loyalties dear,  
All promptitudes fitting, all services meet.

“ But none honours God like the thirst of desire,  
Nor possesses the heart so completely with him ;  
For it burns the world out with the swift ease of fire,  
And fills life with good works, till it runs o'er the brim.

“ Then pray for desire, for love's wistfullest yearning,  
For the beautiful pining of holy desire ;  
Yes, pray for a soul that is ceaselessly burning,  
With the soft fragrant flames of this thrice happy fire.

“ For the heart only dwells, truly dwells, with its treasure,  
And the languor of love captive hearts can unfetter ;  
And they who love God cannot love him by measure,  
For their love is but hunger to love him still better.

“ Is it hard to serve God, timid soul ? Hast thou found  
Gloomy forests, dark glens, mountain-tops on thy way ?  
All the hard would be easy, all the tangles unwound,  
Wouldst thou only desire as well as obey.

“ For the lack of desire is the ill of all ills ;  
Many thousands through it the dark pathway have trod,  
The balsam, the wine of predestinate wills  
Is a jubilant pining and longing for God.

“ ’Tis a fire that will burn what thou canst not pass over ;  
’Tis a lightning that breaks away all bars to love ;  
’Tis a sunbeam the secrets of God to discover ;  
’Tis the wing David prayed for, the wing of the Dove.

“ I have seen living men—and their good angels know,  
How they failed and fell short thro’ the want of desire ;  
Souls once almost saints, have descended so low,  
’Twill be much if their wings bear them over the fire.

“ I have seen dying men, not so grand in their dying  
As our love would have wished, and thro’ lack of desire.  
Oh that we may die languishing, burning, and sighing,  
For God’s last grace and best is to die all on fire.

“ Oh then wish more for God, burn more with desire,  
Covet more the dear sight of His marvellous face ;  
Pray louder, pray longer, for the sweet gift of fire  
To come down on thy heart with its whirlwinds of grace.

“ Yes, pine for thy God, fainting soul ! ever pine,  
Oh, languish mid all that life gives thee of mirth ;  
Famished, thirsty, and restless,—let such life be thine,—  
For what sight is to heaven, desire is to earth.

“ God loves to be longed for, He longs to be sought,  
For He sought us Himself with such longing and love.  
He died for desire of us, marvellous thought !  
And He yearns for us now to be with Him above.”

FABER.

“ And here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Thee ; and although we be unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto Thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech Thee to accept this our bounden duty and service ; not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offences, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.”

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“Accepted in the Beloved.”—EPH. i. 6.

## AROUND US.

BUT beside this narrow, daily life, there is another—there is the life of active service in which we take part, whether in connection with or apart from our own home, for, knowing Christ ourselves, it is impossible, but that sooner or later, in some way or other, we find means of bringing others to know Him.

God has given to each their own special place; but, oh, are we, in that place, offering the very highest and best service to Him—the service that springs of love: Love, you know, is never contented with less than the very best; it is quick to detect possibilities of

service, eager to follow them, strong to bear, attempts what is even beyond its strength, for it forgets its own weakness and unfitness, *resting* in Him who is Strength, and Power, and Wisdom, and stretches out to fulfil *all* its desire and hope, and longing, in the service of Christ its Example. He came as “servant of all,” and in that deep lowliness proved Himself “first” and “chiefest”—“the chiefest among ten thousand.” And now He lives everlasting the Priest and the King of those who, following in His footprints, strive also to be “servants of *all*,” that they may completely be “the servants of Jesus Christ.”

And what footprints! But for love, none surely would ever dare even to try the art of placing his own feet within them; but love is so humble and brave, it cannot help but venture.

We read of the Queen of Sheba, that when she came to see Solomon, she brought with her “a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and

very much gold, and precious stones.” (1 Kings x. 2.) Such was the custom in the East when visiting princes; the first act was to present a rich gift: so did Jacob send a present down to Egypt by his ten sons; so had he formerly sent to Esau; so did the Magi bring and present to our Lord; and doubtless the noble Queen of Sheba had very specially prepared a costly gift for the monarch whose fame had so attracted her.

Yet we read nothing of it, when she appeared before him; we only read that she “communed with him of all that was in her heart”—for perhaps when she saw his riches and gold and precious stones, she felt the gift she had fancied so great would be as nothing where all was “riches and wealth, and honour,” such as none other king had ever had, and such as none would ever have again. (2 Chron. i. 12.)

Everything was wonderful to her—even “the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their

apparel, and his cup-bearers, and his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the Lord.” (1 Kings x. 5.)

She was a Queen, with servants and ministers, and yet never had she seen anything like it, and at last it tells us—“there was no more spirit left in her.” She was lost; there was no room for self any longer, now that she knew King Solomon and his glory, and she turns and speaks to him: “It was a *true report* that I heard. . . . and behold, *the half was not told me!*”—and yet now, for the first time, she hastens to bring forth her presents:—

“A hundred and twenty talents of gold” (2 Chron. ix. 9); but what was that, when “the weight of gold that came to Solomon in *one* (“each”\*) year was six hundred three score and six talents of gold!” (1 Kings x. 14.) “And of spices great abundance and precious stones” (2 Chron. ix. 9); but, “he had of the merchantmen, and of the traffic of

\* Wordsworth.

the spice merchants, and of all the kings of Arabia, and of the governors of the country!" Yet with all this, "*neither was there any such spice as the Queen of Sheba gave King Solomon.*" Surely it was that "because of the savour of *his* good ointment, his name was to her as ointment poured forth" (Cant. i. 3), and therefore in his presence it could not be otherwise than that "*her* spikenard sent forth the smell thereof" (Cant. i. 12); little and small in themselves, but weighty with love, she brought her lowly offerings, not because of herself but because of the king.

So will it be with us,—of what value is our service? Of what worth our ignorant faltering work?

Of what *worth*?

In our eyes of none, yet still we offer it because of love; and see what He says of one in whom His love thus brings forth service:—

"I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh's

chariots" (Cant. i. 9); and Pharaoh's horses, perfect in strength, alert to obedience, were each *one* worth "150 shekels of silver." (2 Chron. i. 17.)

"Thy cheeks are comely with rows of jewels;" that is, "comely through *my* comeliness which *I* had put upon thee, saith the Lord." (Ezek. xvi. 14.)

"Thy neck with chains of gold,"—for precious indeed to Him, is the faith which unites each believer to the Head.

"Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair, thou hast doves' eyes," for though in times past "ye have lien among the pots," now are ye, "as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold." (Ps. lxxviii. 13.)

Is not the service of one, *thus* loved and cared for, and who can return for all answer, "Behold, *Thou* art fair my Beloved" (Cant. i. 16); is it not precious—is it not to Him as "*none other spice?*" Listen how he asks for it:—

"O my dove, that art in the clefts of

the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me *see thy countenance*, let me *hear thy voice*; for sweet is thy voice and thy countenance is comely." (Cant. ii. 14.)

"Thy voice sweet and thy countenance comely?" How then in His service will it attract; how will it command; how beseech; how implore; how rejoice; how weep; not, perhaps, with great words of eloquence, but as "a still small voice," simple and natural; speaking of the things it has heard and seen and looked upon—in truth and love, heart answering to heart. Love, with winged feet, seeking the unloving and unlovely. Love, carrying the gospel of glad-tidings to those who do not care to seek it. Love, entreating those who have forsaken their first love to return, for "the Lord's hand is not shortened that He cannot save, nor His ear heavy that He cannot hear." Love, "feeding the flock of God. . . . taking the oversight thereof . . . willingly. . . . and of a ready mind" (1 Peter, v. 2); forgetting self, mindful

only of the chief Shepherd and the flock —*His* flock. Love, seeking to draw out the living water, Sunday by Sunday, to the class which is dull and heavy, which is giddy, which seems unimpressible. Love, daily teaching, unobserved, in the quiet school. Love, laid aside, yet there “helping together by prayer.” (2 Cor. i. 2.) Love, plying the arduous task of showing gentleness and firmness, and, if may be, healing, to the sick in body. Love, not slothful, diligent, just and true in business. Love, obeying and serving earthly masters in singleness of heart. For all service—lowly or high, small or great—nothing but love, love, love. Love from God, bringing out love to Him; Love for God causing love to our neighbour.

“Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us. . . Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us. God is love, and he

that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him" (1 Jno. iv. 10, 11, 12, 16.) Love then is the preparation, the commencement, the continuance of service.

To some, their work is apparent; not sought perhaps — or perhaps it is sought; however it be, it is from God, of God.

With others, it is not so apparent—still perhaps, to be undertaken. It is to be for the God you love—it is to be for those who love Him—it is to be for those who love Him not.

It is to be for these, and yet, all the time, it will imperceptibly mould and fashion *you* for your mansion that is preparing, the house eternal in the heavens, for though now "in building" it is built "of stone *made ready before it is brought thither*; so that there is neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it is in building." (1 Kings vi. 7.) All is perfected that enters there. "Earth is the work-

shop where God makes men ; Heaven is the palace where He shows them.” \*

What service of love *is* to be yours ? There were many different services in the house of the Lord of old, among whom, “ were very able men for the work of the service of the house of God.” (1 Chr. ix. 13.) Keepers of the gates and entry-porters, rulers, those set over the vessels, singers, harpers, and many other offices ; all performed as to the Lord ; all of God ; and many are pictures of lowly acts of love that we may perform : but the most important of all was the service of the priests—it was the highest, the fullest, the most sacred.

We know the King of Love—we love Him ; has our love carried us to the uttermost limits, to the greatest possibilities of service to Him ? Honourable is the career of a soldier in the ranks ; but what of him who rises to command ?

Have we chosen, rather, have we accepted, the very highest God *will* bestow

\* From a sermon.

upon us? Are we shrinking back from a place wherein the love of God is ready to place us, because we deem ourselves unfit for it? Is there some special place, needing a worker, beyond *our* capabilities (but who that may live and rely on *God* will measure his own powers), and none to enter in and work there, and shall we not, for His sake, step forward, and fill up the gap? Is there not sometimes more true humility in fulfilling a hard and difficult task than in drawing back and renouncing it?

I do not see how we can ever draw back, if we believe that the Lord will open to us *His* good treasure.

St. Paul, writing to the Colossians, prays that they may “be *filled* with the knowledge of His will, in *all* wisdom . . . . . *all* pleasing . . . *all* might . . . *all* patience and long-suffering,” and the reason this is possible for us is, that it is not of self—but—“according to *His* glorious power.” (Col. i. 9, 10, 11.) “Is not this destructive of the grasshopper

system? Do you remember what that is? Let us read the report of the unfaithful spies. (Num. xiii. 33.) '*We were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.*' God's people, to-day, as of old, sadly elevate self, and debase their Lord, when they take the position of grasshoppers in the presence of the giants with whom they have to do battle. Never can it be true, EXCEPT when we go a-warfareing on our own charges."

Our God will teach each the truth of these things for his own individual work; only, let us not miss the highest that He *will* bestow; let us measure, not self, but the power of Christ, and also, what is fit service, for a service of love, to a King of Love; let us aim at all that is likest and nearest to Him, *Love*. Let us remember He is the "faithful witness"

(Rev. i. 5), and let us be faithful witnesses to Him; “faithful unto death” (Rev. ii. 10); not only unto the death of the body, but unto the death of which St. Paul speaks, when he says:—“I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus *I die daily*” (1 Cor. xv. 31); then shall we wear “a crown of life,” even here, as well as in the world to come.

He is “the first-begotten from the dead,” and let us offer to Him, not only our first-fruits, but the whole harvest of our being.

He is “the Prince of the Kings of the earth,” and let us live as those whom He shall not be “ashamed to call brethren.”

He hath loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, *and hath made us “kings and priests unto God and His Father.”*

“Kings unto God, we may not doubt our power,  
We may not languish when he says, ‘Be strong,’—  
We must move on through every adverse hour,  
And take possession as we pass along.

“ Yes, all is for us—nothing shall withstand  
Our faithful, valiant, persevering claim ;—  
The rod of God’s Anointed in our hand,  
And our assurance His unchanging name.

“ We need no haste, when He has said, ‘ Be still ’—  
No peace where He has charged us to contend ;  
*Only the fearless love to do His will,*  
And to show forth His honour to the end,

“ O ye that faint and die, arise and live !  
Sing ye that all things have a charge to bless !  
If he is faithful who hath sworn to give,  
Then be ye faithful and possess.

“ Take thy whole portion with thy Master’s mind—  
Toil, hindrance, hardness, with his virtue take—  
And think how short a time thy heart may find  
To labour or to suffer for his sake.” \*

Will you accept the office ?

\* L. A. W.

## VI.

“There is a secret in the days of God, with His own  
children, which sweetens all He does.”

## IN STILLNESS.

“To you it is *given* in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake.”—PHIL. ii. 29.

A SPECIAL gift of love are those suffering seasons which God is apt to give to His own.

Once it was the *service* of love, now it is the *rest* of love.

The absorbing work and interest must be laid aside; what was bound so close must be unloosed; that which seemed to depend on you must do without you; the place that none other could fill must be supplied by another; and you? you must be still and suffer. But what is that when it comes of love?

“I could from all things parted be,  
But never, never, Lord, from Thee.”

We read in St. Luke's gospel that short story in the life of Mary and Martha; Martha was busy about much serving, Mary "sat at Jesus' feet, and heard His word." Both parts were acceptable to God, but only *one was needful*; and Jesus calls it "that good part which shall not be taken away from her."

Service He may give, and He may take away, but the "quiet abode at His feet" is yours for ever. And how do you know to what wondrous blessing God will lead you—to what revelations of Himself now that you are laid by—unable for work, in stillness, and perhaps in suffering; fit for no outward tumult and bustle; only able to listen to *His* voice, and not to that sometimes; but even then you are not forsaken, for—

"Leaning on Jesus breast," \*  
"There the weary be at rest." †

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\* John xiii. 25.

† Job iii. 17.

Perhaps you fancied these still hours and days—possibly months, or even years—were to be dry and arid, but “they thirsted not when *He* led them through the deserts,” for where *He* is “the desert blossoms as the rose.” (Ps. 48, 21.) “The thirsty ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water; in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass, with reeds and rushes.” (Isa. xxxv. 7.)

How cool, how resting, and satisfied. Truly, “My people shall be *satisfied* with my goodness, said the Lord.” (Jer. xxxi. 14.)

Have you accepted your gift of stillness and suffering, or turned away because it was not to your taste? Are you looking upon it as a hard painful thing given you to bear, and have you been looking so exclusively at the lesson that you have forgotten the teacher? You cannot be too faithful to the lesson, but be as faithful to *Him* who teaches it. “He knows the learner as well as the

lesson,"\* and "Every good and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights, in whom is no variableness, nor shadow of turning." (Jas. i. 17.) His heart is full of love, and tenderness, gentleness, and compassion, as He draws you aside in the wilderness, and bids you take *Himself* as your portion; and what deep, soft, tender pictures He gives of Himself, that none may say,—I am too weak, too timid; a mother comforting, a hen brooding over her chickens and covering them with her feathers, an eagle bearing her little ones upwards on her own wings.

So this quiet time is a special gift of love, to be accepted and laid at *His* feet, and then lifted "rejoicing in *His* strength," and borne as a crown, bestowed upon you to beautify you in *His* eyes, to adorn you in *His* sight; to fit you for Himself; to *satisfy* you with *His* love.

Yes, that is it; quietness in itself, for any length of time, would be unbearable;

\* From a Sermon.

but quietness with the one we love best, who can measure, who can tell the satisfaction? How much we are willing to miss, to lose, to forego, that we may be with that one; how we hunger for that companionship, and has it not long been an eager cry of yours,—“the companions hear Thy voice, cause *me* to hear it?” (Cant. viii. 13.)

Oh, He is going to speak to you now, so wondrously; He has made it very still and quiet, and do you not love Him enough, do you not want and need Him enough, to be content for a short time to do nothing but *receive from Him*?

“To give than to receive more blest,  
Thou said’st: Oh, Thou giver free!  
Good measure, shaken down and press’d  
Together, now I ask from Thee;  
Oh! give to me, dear Lord, and still  
Increase thy boons, make broad the place  
Where Thou dost dwell in me, and fill  
My hands with gifts, my heart with grace;  
But *let me look upon thy face*,  
What need to mourn if thou on mine  
But little comeliness should trace;  
When love can give me all of Thine;

The loved are fair, the loved are dressed  
In garments rich and fresh and rare;  
Oh! bless Thou me, and I am blest!  
Oh; love *Thou* me, and I am fair.”\*

“ He maketh me to lie down in green pastures ” (Ps. xxiii. 2), “ satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the Lord.” (Deut. xxxiii. 23.)

\* Dora Greenwell.

**VII.**

“Joy,—peace in flower.”

FROM A SERMON.

“Of all the lights you carry in your face, joy will reach the furthest out to sea.”

H. W. BEECHER.

“Be much with God and your face will shine, let all men see the new creation.”

BRAMWELL.

## JOY IN HIM.

HE says,—“He will rejoice over thee with joy ; He will rest in His love ; He will joy over thee with singing” (Zeph. iii. 17) ; and if you know the least little bit of this, can you keep from joy yourself ?

If there is the music of love in your heart, there will be joy in your face, joy in your words, joy in your ways.

Christ’s, bought with the price of His most precious blood ; redeemed, sanctified, kept by the power of God, we have *good* cause to “joy and rejoice.” (Phil. ii. 17.)

Who should be so bright, who so glad, who so rejoicing as those who “know

the king in His beauty,” who know His love, for whatever our path, whether of service or rest or suffering, whether lowly or great, the same song flows through it ;—love.

Yes, those who are His have some one in whom they do well to rejoice ; the thought of self has past and daily passes away, and being at liberty from that slave and hindrance, they can joy “*in the Lord.*”

Oh, there is so much said about joy, for God has given us such a portion in Himself as the heart cannot contain ; think of it, *Himself*—“A well of water springing up into everlasting life” (John iv. 14) ; and this to be “*in*” us ! Is it any wonder that this “sweet affection of the soul”\* to Christ bursts forth, joying to be united to Him, joying in the union, joying in all that brings glory and honour to Him, joying in the joy yet to be. Is it any wonder that David

\* Cruden.

cries out, “God, *my exceeding joy.*” (Ps. xlivi. 4.)

We read of the “joy of the *Lord* being our strength.” (Neh. viii. 10.)

Of having *Christ's* “joy fulfilled” in us. (John xvii. 13.) Of “joy in the *Holy Ghost*” (Rom. xiv. 17), and “joy of the *Holy Ghost*.” (1 Thes. i. 6.) Of “joy” as a fruit of the *Holy Ghost*. (Gal. v. 22.)

Do we think enough of it? If not, surely it is that we do not think enough of Christ, for He is so lovely that at the thought of Him joy cannot help itself, but springs up unbidden.

Let us see where joy is to be with us? The source is above—in the Father, the Son and the *Holy Ghost*. It flows down and springs up in us, first in our *soul*.

“My *soul* shall be joyful in the *Lord*” (Ps. xxxv. 9); and then it bursts forth in the heart; “My servants shall sing for joy of *heart*” (Ps. lxv. 14); then it flows out in praise. “My *mouth* shall praise thee with joyful *lips*” (Ps. lxviii. 5); and the feet are strengthened and “*leap* for

joy" (Luke vi. 23); and "everlasting joy is on their *heads*." (Isa. li. 11.)

It does not cease because of earth's sorrows and troubles, for even "the widow's heart sings for joy." (Job xxix. 13.)

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy" (Ps. cxxvi. 5); and He gives them "the oil of joy for mourning" (Isa. lxi. 3). He even "turns their mourning into joy." (Jer. xxxi. 13.) The Lord Jesus, "for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross" (Heb. xii.); and therefore tells His disciples that *their* sorrow shall be turned into joy." (John xvi. 20.) All this because our joy is to be *in the Lord* and not in self, not in any other.

The sorrows of life and the joy in the Lord flow on side by side, and every vacant place in your heart He will *fill* with His love and joy, for what cannot *He* do?

"I must have all things, and abound,  
While God is God to me."

The more you have of *Him*, the more you will find you have this joy; do not seek *it* but *Him*. "To know Him is

the strength of obedience and the *joy* of communion.”\* “Joy of God is the strength of work for God ; work for God is the fixing of joy in God ;”† but do not seek the circumference and so miss it, through not finding the centre.

It is joy *in*, not apart from the Lord, and since you yourself are “in the Lord,” “enter thou into His joy.”

Can you read the 103rd Psalm and not be joyful? Look at what is contained in it. There are two parts to be noticed.

The Lord’s part and our part. Within *me* ; iniquities, diseases, a life in danger of destruction, a hungry mouth, a youth fainting and aging, oppression, sins, transgressions, a feeble frame, altogether nothing stronger than dust” (Ps. ciii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, 12, 14), and we feel it no wonder that this poor nature of ours seeks that for which it has a natural affinity, and that David in another place says—“My soul cleaveth to the dust.”

Then how shall we loose the soul and

\* Adolph Saphir.

† From a Sermon.

cause it to spring from the dust, and “mount up with wings as eagles” (Isa. xl. 31), seeking and searching straight into the face of Light? Just by looking on the *Lord’s* part in your soul, for it is to them that “wait on the *Lord*” that He reveals Himself. You are waiting—are you willing to receive?

Let us see what is said of *Him* in the 103rd Psalm: we have looked quite long enough at self. We find that for every need in us He has a corresponding—no, not corresponding—an *overflowing* supply to meet it. He “forgiveth,” “healeth,” “redeemeth,” “crowneth with loving-kindness and tender mercies,” “satisfieth,” “reneweth,” so that there is no failing old age in spiritual life, but strength and vigour ever increasing. He is “merciful,” “gracious,” “will not always chide,” “hath not dealt with us nor rewarded us according to our sins.” “He hath removed our transgressions;” how far?—from north to south? No, that is not far enough—they are actual

definite points—but from “east to west;” for however far you follow, however fast you travel, the west will always sink before you, and the east will rise in the far distant.

Beside this, He “pitieth” us; He “knoweth” this poor frame of ours; He ever “remembereth” that we are dust—“A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench.” (Isa. xlvi. 3.) “The crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places smooth.” (Isa. xl. 4.)

So you see however low down you are, God turns it *all to good*—you can never be too low for Him. Do you *feel* very low?—Yes? Well, He knew you would, and has given you a message—“I *dwell* . . . . with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit.” (Isa. xv.) Why does He dwell there? Just to lift you up above it all, “to revive the spirit” and to “revive the heart;” and you know you *will* be revived with Him dwelling there; Him,—joy, strength, comfort, love.

Oh! what a blessed dwelling it will become. Was it lonely and sad? “The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them.” (Isa. xxxv. 1.) Was it arid and barren, and full of straggling poisonous weeds? “The desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon: they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.” (Isa. xxxv. 2, 3.) “Ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree.” (Isa. lv. 12, 13.)

Were you weak and feeble, and of a fearful heart? Here is a command, whereof you may rejoice and be exceeding glad,—you are no longer to look at

the “weak hands,” the “feeble knees,” the “fearful heart:” “*Be strong, fear not.*” (Isa. xxxv. 4.) Why? being as I am, how can such things be? “Behold, your *God* . . . . *God* . . . . *He* will come and save you.” (Isa. xxxv. 4).

And He being come, the eyes that strove so hard to see, but were only dazed by the light, receive their sight; the sight of *Him* gives the sight to see all else.

The ears that listened and heard without understanding, are unstopped, and the tender blessed name and voice of Jesus falls like music, and whispers love, joy, and peace.

The halting, limping man, who knew not what way to go, what voice to obey, “leaps as an hart;” for the way in which he goes, though it is “the way of holiness,” yet if he even be “a fool, he shall not err therein.” (Isa. xxxv. 8); and surely the reason is that, “Thus saith the High and Holy One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy,

*I dwell in the high and holy place*" (Isa. lvii. 15); and being there with Him, "in His light we also see light."

And then the tongue that was so silent and tied, and spoke but anguish and woe, sorrow and disappointment, what of it? "The tongue of the dumb shall *sing*,"—yes, it has something whereof to sing and rejoice; for waters have broken out, and streams flow through the land—"A well of water springing up unto everlasting life" (John iv. 14); *rivers* of living water" (John vii. 38); "And it shall come to pass in that day that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and all the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim." (Joel iii. 18.)

This is a prophecy, a promise of blessing when God "shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem" (Joel iii. 1); but perhaps we, who are the

house of the Lord, the temple of the Holy Ghost, may find an application to ourselves—and let us follow it up. Shall we also “water the valley?” Shall the light and the joy and the brightness of “Christ in us” attract and draw those that are weary and tired? draw them to the fountain of life from which we slake our thirst?

Oh, let it be so; let us win, let us draw, let us claim for Christ by the joy of our life. “He that *winneth* souls is wise” (Prov. xi. 30); and “our power in drawing others after the Lord rests mainly in our joy and communion with Him ourselves.”\*

Oh, let us not miss this *winning*; “that if any obey not the word, they may *without the word* be won by the conversation.” (1 Pet. iii. 1.)

Oh, we who have been so blest, we who are so filled and loved, let us draw others to love and joy.

We know what trouble and grief and

\* From a Sermon.

distress are; we know what it is to be empty and void and waste; we know what it is to have our “*soul melted because of trouble*” (Ps. cvii. 26): but now He has brought us into our desired haven—the haven where they, if they did but know it, would also be. He has brought us out “into a wealthy place;” let us show how rich and full and satisfied we are; and it is one of the strange things of God’s kingdom, that if another comes to share these same riches, we too feel ourselves to grow richer.

And then at the last—“The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and *everlasting* joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.” (Isa. xxxv. 10.)

VIII.

G

“ All joys harmonised.”

FROM A SERMON.

“ The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart,  
A fountain ever springing;  
All things are mine since I am his,—  
How can I keep from singing ? ”

## PEACE.

“The Peace of God.”

THIS is deeper than joy ; we *may* be without joy ; we cannot be without peace, if we are His ; for where the “Prince of Peace” governs, there must be peace ; and is it not blessed that “of the increase of His . . . *peace* there shall be no end ?” (Isa. ix. 9.)

Therefore, hearken unto Him, and then shall “thy peace be as a river” (Isa. xlvi. 18), deep, and still, ever flowing on to the ocean of love.

If the heart is full of love, there must be peace ; “Love is our *weight*,”\* and

\* St. Augustine.

that weight balances us, and holds us firm through all that would otherwise toss us to and fro on the waves of this troublesome world.

Christ gave us a “twofold peace when He left this earth—one a legacy, the peace of the cross ; the other a gift, communion with a risen Saviour ;” and it is this peace of His, which, because it “passes all understanding, *keeps* our hearts ;” it is a sort of covenant and remembrance between us and Him, that lies deep in our hearts, full of blessing and grace.

“The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.” (Rom. xiv. 15.) “Joy and peace,” because you “know in *Whom* you have believed ;” it is no wavering, uncertain trust, but stayed on God. “Oh God, my heart is fixed, my heart is *fixed*, I will sing and give thanks.” Held in His hand, in His heart, “His left hand under your head, his right hand

embracing you" (Cant. ii. 9); surely it is indeed peace.

"Resting in *Him*, and waiting patiently for *Him*," it is peace.

"Risen with Christ," and yet "*hid* with Him," it is peace.

"Knowing the love of Christ," it is peace; and it is the "God of peace who shall bruise Satan under your feet. (Rom. xvi. 20.)

The "God of peace who shall sanctify you wholly." (1 Thes. v. 23.)

The "God of peace who shall make you perfect, establish, strengthen, settle you (Heb. xiii. 20), and the "God of peace shall be with you." (Phil. iv. 9.)

Can you say but that He "maketh peace in all thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat?" (Ps. cxlvii. 14.)

This peace is just a simple full heart-rest in Christ. The turbulent eagerness of joy may pass, but it passes only to deepen, just as the waters of a great river bubble and rise, rushing with full strength and life, eager to meet what lies before,

and you find them again far far away ; the same waters, the same life, but oh, what a depth ! how bright, how full, how *concentrated*. How perfectly they give back the reflection of the skies ! *still*, with fulness of life. So with the spiritual life : there is a quiet fixing of joy in God, which has brought peace, a peace which nothing can disturb, for it is founded on a Rock, and that Rock is Christ.

True, the surface may still quiver and toss, lifted with storm and wind ; still it may ripple and smile, and exult in the breeze, but the great volume beneath is still.

There is room for all where the foundation is sure and steadfast.

“Blessed are the single-hearted, for they shall enjoy much peace,” says Thomas à Kempis, and surely that gives us the root. A “single” heart enjoys this wondrous peace, for its object, aim, desire, is but one—*Christ*—“to know *Him* ;” and it presses onward towards its mark, free and unshackled, and unembarrassed.

What, if in that knowing of *Himself*, Christ has added a glimpse of the “fellowship of His sufferings?” (Phil. iii. 10.) “To you it is *given* in the behalf of Christ.” Have you watched with Him “one hour?” Once He prayed that some would “watch with Him one hour;” but their eyes were heavy with sleep, for they knew Him not perfectly then, and when He came for comfort He found them sleeping.

Did He come to you and find you waking? perhaps “*willing against your will*,” perhaps praying His own prayer, “Father, if it be possible remove this cup from me,” and He loved you so, He stayed you up against yourself; he added the full blessing from which you shrank, and for which, as you look back, you thank and praise Him, though you dared not pray for it.

“Knowledge by suffering entereth,  
And life is perfected in death.”

What knowledge has suffering brought to you? Much, doubtless; but above all,

has not the slender thread of love (which, nevertheless, seemed then great and strong) that bound you and your life and your God, has it not grown a mighty knotted cable—strong as death? And perhaps it is the suffering more than aught else, that has brought to your consciousness this wondrous revelation of God's love, and that has harmonised the joys into “perfect peace.”

Perfect peace, still and ever increasing; “the peace of *God*, which passeth all understanding.” The darkness and shadows find no place, they flee away; all is *love*, all is *peace*—

“ . . . white and pure, with sunniest affections,  
Full from the face of Christ;  
And both, across the sun besilvered tide,  
Help to the haven where the heart would ride.”

## IX.

“It was not that our love was cold,  
That earthly lights were burning dim;  
But that the Shepherd from His fold  
Had smiled, and drawn them unto Him.

“Praise God, the Shepherd is so sweet!  
Praise God, the country is so fair!  
We would not hold them from His feet;  
We can but haste to meet them there.”

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“And then, with Him go hand in hand,  
Far into bliss.”

DEAN ALFORD.

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“All that life is Love.”

ST. BERNARD.

## THE NEW HOME.

“ L O, a great multitude, which no man could number. . . These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them; nor any heat: for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”  
(Rev. vii. 4, 17.)

“These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God and the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile, for they are without fault before the throne of God. . . . Yea, they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.” (Rev. xiv. 4, 5, 13.)

“Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.” (Rev. xix. 9.)

“There was no more sea. . . . God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes ; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain. . . . No temple therein—no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it. . . . No night there . . . in no wise enter into it anything that defileth . . . no more curse . . . no night . . . no need of candle, neither light of the sun.” (Rev. xxi. 1, 4, 22, 23, 25, 27 ; 3, 5.)

“God will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself

shall be with them, and be their God. . . . The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it . . . the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof . . . the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him ; and they *shall see His face*, and *His* name shall be in their fore-heads. The Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever.” (Rev. xxi. 3, 22, 23 ; xxii. 3, 4, 5.)

“ Come thou bright and holy morning,  
Lord, our Sun arise ;  
Send the angels of Thy coming,  
Thro’ the silent skies.” \*

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\* E. F. B.

“If we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.”—ROM. viii. 25.

“ Oh, to be there !  
Where never tears of sorrow  
Shall dim the eye, nor aching pain, nor care  
Shall ever cloud our morrow,  
Oh, to be there !

“ Oh, lovely home !  
Thy fragrant, thornless flowers  
Droop not, nor die,—but everlasting bloom  
Crowns all thy golden hours,  
Oh, lovely home !

“ Oh, let me go !  
Death shall not there dissever  
Our loving hearts,—Rivers of pleasure flow  
At God’s right hand for ever, .  
Oh, let me go !

“ For Thou art there,  
Who unto me hast given  
Eternal life, making me pure and fair :  
And this to me is Heaven  
That THOU art there.”

BOSTON:

PRINTED BY T. R. MARVIN & SON,

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